

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



**ASSOCIATION of
GOVERNMENTS**

**Pacific Electric ROW/West Santa Ana Branch Corridor
Alternatives Analysis**

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

City of Buena Park
Walter D. Ehlers Community Center – Liberty Hall
8150 Knott Ave.
Buena Park, CA 90620

Meeting Notes

Invitees	Organization
Philip Law	SCAG
Matt Gleason	SCAG
Stephen Fox	SCAG
Wendy Garcia	OCTA
Jonathan Klein	FTA
Linda Wright	Caltrans District 7
John Walker	Los Angeles County DPW
Howard Huie	CPUC
Karen Heit	Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Jerry Wood	Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Michael Kodama	OLDA
Bob Huddy	OLDA
David Sanchez	City of Anaheim
Jim Biery	City of Buena Park
Deborah Chankin	City of Bellflower
Hal Arbogast	City of Cerritos
Awin Papa	City of Cypress
Keith Jones	City of Garden Grove
Douglas Dumhart	City of La Palma
Jimmy Ewenike	City of Los Angeles, LADOT
Elias Saikoy	City of Lynwood
Dave Biondolillo	City of Santa Ana
Alvie Betancourt	City of South Gate
Kevin Wilson	City of Vernon
Cathy Higley	Cordoba
Katherine Padilla	Katherine Padilla & Associates
Nancy Michali	AECOM
Yara Jasso	AECOM
Joel Ulloa	AECOM

1. Welcome

- P. Law began the meeting with introductions and briefly explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss: the LPA Adoption timeline; Conceptual Set of Alternatives; the approach for the Initial Screening efforts; and an overview of what was heard at the last community meetings.

2. Purpose and Need Report

- N. Michali announced that all comments on the Purpose and Need Report had been reviewed and documented. A final version of the Purpose and Need Report will be sent out upon completing revisions.
- N. Michali provided a brief overview of the LPA Adoption timeline.
 - D. Chankin asked the team to please restate the difference between an LPA and an LPS, and how that fits into the LPA Adoption Actions?
- N. Michali: They are basically the same thing. Typically, it is easier to determine one alternative (Locally Preferred Alternative) when projects are considering only a few alternatives. Since we are dealing with two counties, have multiple funding sources, and have a wide variety of alternatives on the table, and as the AA study may not result in a single LPA, we are calling it a Locally Preferred Strategy.
- N. Michali provided a brief overview of the AA process and where we are in the process, and how the Initial Set of Alternatives were determined.

3. Definition of Conceptual Set of Alternatives

- N. Michali explained what the possible connections may be north from the PEROW/WSAB Corridor to Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles, as well as south from the ROW to the Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center. She reviewed the different possibilities, opportunities, and constraints in connecting north for each alternative, as well as the possible stations along the conceptual alignments. Some of the challenges included ROW width constraints, accommodating freight activity, coordination with other agencies and railroads for ROW use, entering Union Station, and station locations.
 - K. Wilson: How are you planning to complete an AA completed by the end of this year (2011), given all of these challenges?
 - N. Michali: I think we want to get all of the issues out on the table at this point in the Initial Screening, and begin to see what the possible alternatives could be. During the Final Screening phase, we can begin to do some engineering analysis and talk to the cities, agencies, and railroads about what works, and then sort out the viable alignments into all of the sub-options for more detailed analysis.
 - K. Wilson: In terms of the Bus Rapid System along Soto Street, I am pretty familiar with Soto Street, and the Bus Rapid is not rapid at all.
 - N. Michali: Yes, you are right. Metro Rapid buses run at about 12-15 mph along Soto Street, along with the local service. We have heard from the community that they do not view this as a viable alternative due to the slow speeds.
-

- C. Higley presented an overview of the Santa Ana-Garden Grove Fixed Guideway Project as part of the discussion on the southern connection conceptual plans. She provided an update of their project status, as well as a thorough explanation of each alternative and alignment options. C. Higley also explained that the BRT option has been screened out and that the Street Car Alternative is the preferred option. Two vehicles are under consideration including a light rail vehicle (Siemens Vehicle) that has been previously approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and may be compatible with the PEROW/WSAB Corridor LRT Alternative, if it the AA Study results as an LRT option; and a Street Car vehicle that they are still investigating.
 - J. Wood: What are your ridership projections?
 - C. Higley: We are just now doing our formalized projections, and the initial segment may carry up to 4,000 passengers a day.
 - N. Michali: How long is the segment?
 - C. Higley: The entire line will be four miles, and the initial segment to Bristol Street is two miles.
 - K. Heit: Is the Siemens car low floor with a double catenary?
 - C. Higley: Yes.
 - M. Kodama: In theory, if a light rail alternative was proposed for the PEROW/WSAB Corridor, then the same tracks can be used for both projects, right?
 - C. Higley: Only if the Siemens or another Light Rail Vehicle is used. The biggest challenge for us is that there are parts of the alignment through Downtown Santa Ana that have very tight curves that can be negotiated best by a street car.
 - N. Michali summarized the Conceptual Set of Alternatives and added that she has seen other projects with greater level of complexity that do end up working out with a final recommendation. Some alternatives will fall off the table due to technical and/or policy issues, while others may not have political and/or community support.
 - J. Wood: What is the timeframe like? At what point do alternatives “fall off the table?”
 - N. Michali: That would probably during April when we reduce the Initial Set of Alternatives to a smaller Final Set of Alternatives, and then as we undertake our technical work from April through September, and return with our findings in October.
 - M. Kodama: If that is the case, until when can alternatives be added to the table?
 - N. Michali: Alternatives need to be added as part of the Final Set of Alternatives to be incorporated in the AA process. During Final Screening, we will have working sessions with the cities and the stations will be finalized at that time.
 - K. Wilson: Have you looked at the Harbor Subdivision Study?
 - N. Michali: We did propose to use that a portion of the Harbor Subdivision as one of our alignments to potentially access Union Station from the west side of the Los Angeles River. The Harbor Subdivision used to provide a direct connection into Union Station, but when they built the Redondo Junction Bridge, a portion of the Subdivision ROW was cut off. Thank you for the suggestion, the team will definitely add that to the map.
 - M. Kodama: One important consideration is that when we consider these alignments and we look at the High Speed Rail option, that the number of stations is significantly
-

fewer than for the other alternatives. If we are not serving our riders, than at what point do we eliminate these types of alternatives?

- N. Michali: This is the purpose of the Initial Screening effort – to look at the technical results and the community input – and begin the process of taking some of those alternatives off the table as we define the Final Set of Alternatives.

4. Initial Screening Approach

- N. Michali explained the status of defining the alternatives and walked through a map for each of the alternatives presenting the conceptual alignments and station spacing.
 - J. Ewenike: Just to reiterate, the city of Los Angeles has expressed concern about and opposition to at-grade operations along Alameda Street. We would suggest an elevated structure. As far as Soto Street is concerned, there was a study in 2006 regarding the potential development of a BRT with dedicated lanes along Soto Street. It was determined that there was inadequate space for providing a dedicated BRT ROW. Since we are talking about things falling off the table, I wanted to bring it up.
 - N. Michali: The BRT is actually a street-running option along Soto Street, and we did not assume that we would be taking lanes or properties along Soto Street. As we further refine this alternative, we would like to meet with the other cities as well, and talk about what their concerns.
 - J. Wood: Will the southern connection be a connection to the street car system (Santa Ana – Garden Grove Fixed Guideway Project) that leads into Santa Ana, or is there a potential to go south all the way into Santa Ana?
 - N. Michali: The AA study covers going all the way into the Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center. Whether it interfaces with the Santa Ana – Garden Grove Fixed Guideway Project, or if there will be a transfer; or if the system will have to run beside, below, or above that project, will be need to be determined. That decision is really dependent on the city Santa Ana and OCTA regarding the street car project.
 - D. Biondolillo: There is a real challenge within the PEROW/WSAB Corridor from the SR-22 down to the Santa Ana River because of width constraints. The challenge is making everything work within those constraints, including proposed off-ramps. Going above may be a possibility.
 - W. Garcia: I believe the city of Santa Ana, also does not want anything besides the street car coming into the downtown civic center, because of the small street right-of-way and tight turns.
 - K. Heit: Is there a possibility to interface two technologies at the northern end of the line?
 - C. Higley: That is what we had thought: having both systems co-exist at this point and allowing for an opportunity for it to be intermodal.
 - D. Biondolillo: We had a workshop with N. Michali and considered the idea that the alternative coming south on the PEROW/WSAB Corridor would be elevated over Harbor Boulevard, creating a transfer with the street car system in Santa Ana.
-

- D. Chankin: (To W. Garcia) Can you re-state the status of the highway portion of the plan?
- W. Garcia: It is unfunded at this time. However, we will be developing either a feasibility report or project study report within the next few years to address the proposed SR-22 off-ramps.
- N. Michali provided an overview of the Initial Screening Report approach, reviewed the Initial Screening Results presented in November, and briefly explained the methodology for developing the report. N. Michali encouraged TAC members to provide input on the report.
 - M. Kodama: When will we see this report?
 - N. Michali: You will potentially have it on the 25th and have two weeks to review it.

5. Round 2 Community Meetings Summary Report

- N. Michali shared what was heard about the alternatives at the community meetings, and what some of the more common concerns were: costs – cost to build, operate, and ride; noise and vibration impacts on residential properties along the Corridor; and vehicular and pedestrian safety concerns, particularly adjacent to schools.
 - M. Kodama: What I heard and felt was that it was very difficult for the community to understand all of the information provided. I think they may have felt misled to think that they were making a decision at this point.
 - N. Michali: We made it very clear during the presentation, discussions, and on the comment cards, that we were asking them what three alternatives they would recommend to be studied further.

6. Next Meeting

Purpose: Conclude Discussion of Initial Screening Results and Discuss Recommendations for Final Set of Alternatives

Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2001, 1:30 PM

Location: TBD

7. Upcoming Schedule of Study Efforts

- | | |
|--|----------|
| ▪ Technical Advisory Committee Meeting | March 15 |
| ▪ Steering Committee Meeting | March 30 |
| ▪ Concurrence on Final Set of Alternatives | March 30 |
| ▪ Initiate Final Screening Efforts | April 4 |